CLAIMS:

1. A method for transmitting data among a plurality of devices connected to a network under control of a controller, the method comprising:

using a broadcast communications transmission interval, transmitting from each of the plurality of devices in the network suspend state data indicating whether the transmitting device can be set in a suspend state; and

receiving the suspend state data in the controller.

2. The transmission method according to claim 1, wherein

the transmitting step includes transmitting the suspend state data when a state of whether the transmitting device can be set in the suspend state is changed.

3. The transmission method according to claim 1, wherein

the transmitting step includes transmitting the suspend state data regularly almost at predetermined time intervals.

4. The transmission method according to claim 1, wherein

the suspend state data includes data on suspend state setting priorities.

5. The transmission method according to claim 1, wherein

the suspend state data includes data on the time from when the transmitting device is set in the suspend state until the transmitting device is released from the suspend state to an active state.

6. The transmission method according to claim 1, further comprising:

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determining in the controller which of the plurality of devices may be set in the suspend state on the basis of the suspend state data; and

sending a command from the controller to set in the suspend state selected devices which the controller determines may be set in the suspend state.

7. The transmission method according to claim 6, wherein

the command is sent to the selected devices when it is determined that the network includes at least one device other than the selected ones of the devices connected to the network in a predetermined state and that the at least one device can be set in the suspend state.

8. A transmission system, comprising:

a plurality of devices connected to a network so that said plurality of devices can transmit data to one another, said plurality of devices including a first device and a second device;

said first device including:

a memory for holding suspend state data indicating whether each of said plurality of devices can be set in a suspend state; and

an output unit operable to output said suspend state data to a broadcast communications transmission interval of said network; and

said second device including:

a receiver operable to receive said suspend state data output to said network; and

a controller operable to determine whether said first device can be set in said suspend state based on said suspend state data received by said receiver, and to control said first device based on said determination.

9.   The transmission system according to claim 8, wherein

said first device transmits said suspend state data from said output unit for a selected one of said devices when a state of whether said selected one of said devices can be set in said suspend state is changed.

10.   The transmission system according to claim 8, wherein

said first device transmits said suspend state data from said output unit regularly almost at predetermined time intervals.

11.   The transmission system according to claim 8, wherein

said memory holds priority data on suspend state setting priorities for said plurality of devices, and adds said priority data to said suspend state data for each of said plurality of devices

12.   The transmission system according to claim 8, wherein

said memory holds time data for selected ones of said plurality of devices, said time data for a specific device including a time, beginning when said specific device is set in said suspend state, for releasing said specific device from said suspend state to an active state; and

said controller controls the release of said specific device from said suspend state to said active state when said time has elapsed.

13.   The transmission system according to claim 8, wherein

said controller controls the setting of said first device in said suspend state when said controller determines that said network includes a third one of said plurality of devices connected to said first device in a predetermined

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state and that both said first device and said third one of said devices can be set in said suspend state.

14. A transmission apparatus connected to a network, comprising:

a memory operable to hold suspend state data indicating whether said transmission apparatus can be set in a suspend state; and

an output unit operable to output said suspend state data held by said memory to a broadcast communications transmission interval of the network.

15. The transmission apparatus according to claim 14, wherein

said output unit outputs said suspend state data when said suspend state data held by said memory is changed.

16. The transmission apparatus according to claim 14, wherein

said output unit outputs said suspend state data regularly almost at predetermined time intervals.

17. The transmission apparatus according to claim 14, wherein

said memory holds priority data on suspend state setting priorities; and

said priority data is added to said suspend state data output from said output unit.

18. The transmission apparatus according to claim 14, wherein

said memory holds time data including a time, beginning when said transmission apparatus is set in said suspend state, for releasing said transmission apparatus from said suspend state to an active state; and

said time data is added to said suspend state data output from said output unit.

19.   A transmission control apparatus for controlling transmission among a plurality of devices in a network, the plurality of devices being mutually connected in a data transmittable state, said transmission control apparatus comprising:

a receiver operable to receive suspend state data transmitted to a broadcast communications transmission interval of the network, said suspend state data indicating whether each of the plurality of devices can be set in a suspend state;

a controller operable to determine whether each of the plurality of devices in the network can be set in said suspend state based on said suspend state data received by said receiver, and to generate a command for controlling a state of each of said plurality of devices based on said determination; and

a transmitter operable to transmit said commands to the network.

20.   The transmission control apparatus according to claim 19, wherein

said controller controls said transmitter to transmit said commands based on priority data added to said suspend state data received by the said receiver.

21.   The transmission control apparatus according to claim 19, wherein

said controller is operable to generate a suspend command to set a target device in said suspend state when said suspend state data indicates that said target device can be set in said suspend state, and is operable to control said transmitter to transmit said suspend command if the network includes another device connected to the network in a predetermined state and it is determined that said another device can be set in said suspend state.

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